



Northern Iraq

Iraqi firemen climb to new heights



Iraqi student firefighters practice their extinguishing skills in Mosul under the training from soldiers of the 938th Engineering Detachment from the Idaho National Guard.

Soldiers teach firefighters new skills in training course

Story and photo by

Pfc. Thomas Day

40th Public Affairs Detachment

MOSUL — The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) ushered in 38 graduates of the Coalition-supported firefighting academy here Nov. 3, the first certified firefighters in the post-Saddam era in Iraq.

The new class of academy-trained firefighters promises to introduce groundbreaking lessons and techniques to the force, previously unknown to Iraq's finest.

The firefighting force in Mosul and throughout Iraq was often ineffective in the field, according to the academy instructors.

Burning buildings, for example, would often be dealt with by flooding the building, a futile and dangerous method.

After the six-week program, more than 1,000 man hours of training and \$300,000 in equipment and academy expenses, the Mosul fire department has a new foundation.

"They went through a six-week training course that's the equivalent

of a (Department of Defense) certified firefighting course," said Capt. Leon Pruett of Pocatello, Idaho, 938th Engineering Detachment (Idaho Army National Guard). "I'd put them against any firefighters in the Army."

The graduates were certified in basic and advanced firefighting skills as well as appropriate techniques in dealing with an aircraft crash. Cadets were required to walk into a burning building and extinguish a fire — something that was not expected of the firemen before.

"It was melting the fire shields, that's how hot it was," Pruett said.

Seven of the original 45 cadets did not make the cut. The remaining cadets cleared every hurdle.

"I'd hire these guys into my civilian department. They're 100 percent ready to go," said Spc. Eric Voss of Halstead, Kan., 482nd Engineering Firefighters Army Reserve. "I wouldn't sign off on their certificates if they weren't."

The seeds were sewn for the new

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Graduates boost police force, security

By **Spc. Mary Rose Xenikakis**

22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

TAL AFAR — One hundred seventy-one new graduates joined the ranks of the more than 50,000 Iraqi police already on the streets of Iraq actively contributing to the security of their country. The successfully trained group of police graduated from the Tal Afar Police Academy on Nov. 3.

Lt. Col. Christopher Pease, commander, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), was a guest speaker at the graduation.

"This is an important day for your families, your towns and Iraq as a whole," he said. "You selected men are now at the forefront of a new endeavor."

Newly appointed police officers went through many different levels of training to bring them to graduation day. They had to pass weapons famil-

iarization, riot control, physical fitness and human ethics along with many other classes.

"These lessons in ethics, police work and values you have learned in the past few weeks will assist you in developing your attitude and professionalism," Pease told the men standing in front of him.

According to Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III, chief civilian administrator in Iraq, the Coalition is working to accelerate the turnover of responsibility and authority to Iraqis on the security front.

"We will expand the number of Iraqis engaged in guarding the country's borders and infrastructure," he said at a recent press conference. "In all, we will have over 200,000 Iraqis involved in their own security forces by September next year."

The graduating class is now capable and ready to join the new Iraqi police force.

"About half of the 171 police who graduated already have jobs with police stations throughout

the area. The other half need to find jobs," said Spc. John Smerbeck, a police academy instructor and soldier with the 1-187th Infantry Regiment.

He said, there are local police stations that have been taking applications and hiring these trained officers.

It should not be difficult for these officers to find jobs since the need for more security forces is increasing as a result of the Coalition's progress.

According to Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, Coalition Joint Task Force-7 commander, in spite of the recent surge of attacks against Coalition forces and the Iraqi people, the Iraqi police are improving the security situation all across the borders of the country.

"Iraqis are sharing the security burden, and that responsibility increases everyday," Sanchez said during a recent press conference.

Training will resume at the end of Ramadan.

Northern Iraq Briefs

101st recovers 7 surface-to-air missiles

MOSUL — The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) recovered seven surface-to-air missiles Nov. 7.

An Iraqi citizen turned in six SA-7s to 101st soldiers in Dahuk. Soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team near Qyarrah Airfield discovered the seventh SA-7 during a routine patrol. The round was found concealed in high grass, and was secured by the soldiers.

Citizens who turn in SA-7s and other weapons that could be used to harm Iraqi citizens and Coalition forces receive a monetary award.

Task Force Ironhorse soldiers conduct show of force

TIKRIT — Task Force Ironhorse units were involved in a show of force as a continuing part of "Operation Ivy Cyclone" in the Tikrit area in the late evening, continuing through the early morning of Nov. 7 and Nov. 8.

The operation targeted areas northeast of Tikrit. Anti-coalition factions have used the areas for weapons caches, ambush sites and safe houses.

In an effort to limit access and deny sanctuary, coalition forces employed an array of weapons systems including artillery, Bradley fighting vehicles, M1 Abrams tanks, and attack helicopters. Air Force provided close air support.

The measured response to anti-coalition activity will continue as required throughout Task Force Ironhorse area of operations.

101st detains 7 in overnight cordon, weapons turned in

MOSUL — A series of overnight cordon and knocks resulted in the detainment of seven individuals in the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) area of operations.

Those detained were suspected in previous attacks on Coalition forces, and of harboring weapons caches. A variety of weapons were also confiscated.

In a separate incident, an Iraqi citizen turned in a significant cache of weapons to the 101st Division Main. The cache consisted of 333 grenades, 92 rocket propelled grenade rounds, and two RPG launchers.



A group of attorneys listen to a speech by Maj. Gen. David Petraeus, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) commander, during a ceremony at the Civil Military Operations Command in Mosul. Soldiers from the 101st educated the attorneys in the practice of law to represent citizens of the Ninevah Province who cannot afford an attorney.

Attorneys make case for justice for all in Iraq

Story and photo by Pfc. Chris Jones
40th Public Affairs Detachment

MOSUL — A ceremony Nov. 1 at the Division Rear compound in Mosul put 48 Iraqi attorneys to work for the city court system to defend those without money to pay for an attorney.

The attorneys were taught the laws and regulations of the new Iraqi provisional government by Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) during a three-week course.

The program was initiated in July, when SJA soldiers learned that many cases in Iraq were tossed aside when a client had no money to pay for an attorney.

Previously, courts in Iraq had no appointed lawyers to defend clients without money to pay for a private attorney, said Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, 101st commander.

"Before this program, if you didn't have money, you didn't get an attorney, and those in jail went without representation," Petraeus said. "And sometimes the only way to get a court date would be to confess after you were tortured."

The 48 Iraqis honored in the ceremony were the first attorneys in northern Iraq to pass an exam developed by Coalition Provisional Authority officials in Baghdad.

The goal of the 101st is to have more than 400 attorneys working for courts in the Ninevah Province by the start of 2004.

Lt. Col. John Bell, a Tennessee state judge and national guardsman, has helped the 101st in the lawyer-training process. He has assisted in the design of a new system to document the court cases.

"Before, the document system was all on paper," Bell said. "It was so dysfunctional you couldn't find a single case."

You'd have a case number called out to you, and if you forgot the number you couldn't track your case down. There really was no way to find your case."

Each attorney will be paid \$100 per month by Coalition forces until the Iraqi government can maintain the salary payment.

"It's like a rebirth of a judicial system," Bell said. "It's already there, but it's being re-grown as a healthier, more stable system."

New education center opens doors for adults

By Spc. Mary Rose Xenikakis
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.

ZUMAR — The first graduating class of the Zumar Adult Education Center, in the town of Zumar, celebrated in an afternoon ceremony to recognize their accomplishments Nov. 1.

With help from local contractors, ambitious school teachers, 1st

Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and the 101st Commanders Emergency Relief Program, the adult education center opened its doors to help further educate local citizens.

The citizens this center helps are those who are lacking in their literary and mathematical skills, skills which are necessary to obtain jobs like police officers, fire fighters and secu-

rity forces for the country of Iraq.

Mazaham Suleman Al Sa'addoon, Zumar's mayor, took part in his community and handed out the certificates of completion to the graduating class.

"We cover basic Arabic, like reading, writing, and sentence structure of the Arabic language," said Salih Abed Khalef, center's headmaster. "They also learn basic mathematics,

like adding, subtracting, multiplication and division."

Salih, speaking proudly of his first graduating class, said there are more great things to come from this school. "The oldest student was 53 and there were 113 students who graduated," Salih said. "I feel it was a very successful program. There are going to be more courses with higher learning, and we will also teach English."

Cards present soldiers with chance to give

Story and photo by
Master Sgt. Kelly Tyler
101st Airborne Division

MOSUL — When Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Brown picked up his mail last week, he had mail for everyone.

Packed into two large boxes were some 2,100 hand-made Christmas cards, courtesy of his aunt, Rita Holmes.

Holmes, of Hamilton, Ohio, sent the intricately-designed blank cards to be mailed back home by deployed service men.

"It is very important to me to be able to help our service men and women to send something home to their loved ones on special days," Holmes said.

"I feel it is a big help to them to be connected during these times."

The cards, all tucked into their own envelopes, came from 68 people in 27 different states, as well as England and Denmark, in response to an Internet posting. All are carefully handmade; some show winter scenes, others host parades of snow-

men. Each one is different.

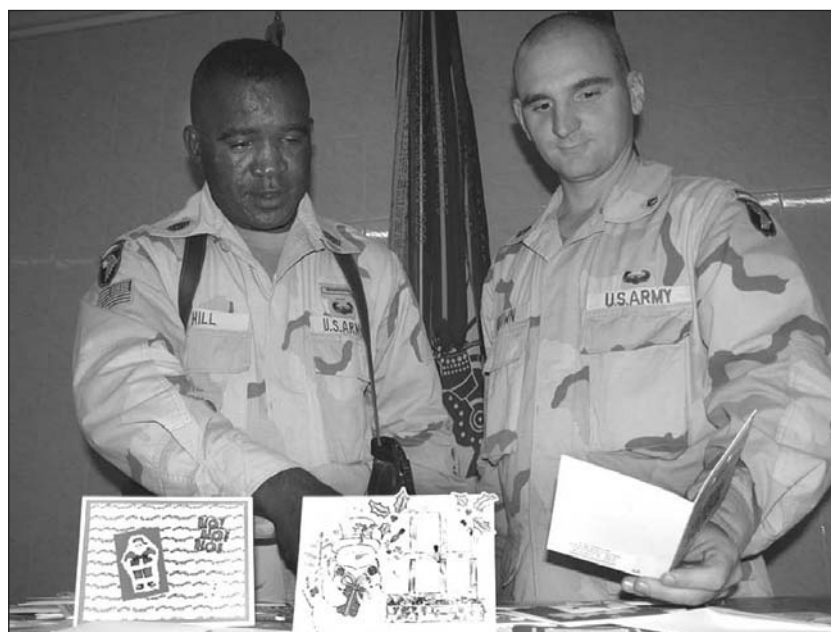
The idea of sending the cards came to Holmes earlier in the year.

"It actually came to me before Mother's Day. I was thinking about making a couple of cards to send to Bobby so he could send them to his wife and mother," Holmes said. "A light bulb came on, and I thought it would be a great thing to do so (other) service men and women could do the same."

Holmes sent 327 Mother's Day cards and nearly 400 Father's Day cards for 101st soldiers to send home. She hopes to get started on a Valentine's Day card project soon.

"It was a surprise," Brown said of his aunt's efforts. "I knew that she likes to be there for people, but I didn't think she would go to this extreme. I figured she might ask for a list of names of people, and put a goody box together, but I never thought it would be something like this."

The outpouring of support for her project also surprised Holmes. "I know that people who make hand-



101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill and Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Brown look over an assortment of Christmas cards mailed to the 101st by Brown's aunt, Rita Holmes, of Hamilton, Ohio. The 2,100 handmade cards are for soldiers to mail back home to family members during the holiday season.

made cards love to have a reason to do it. This was such a special reason; I knew I would get a lot of participation. However, it did surpass my expectations. My goal was to receive 1,000 cards and instead I received 2,149 cards."

The cards will be delivered to the infantry brigades by 101st Airborne Division Command Sergeant Major Marvin Hill.

"Our soldiers here experience several stressors associated with this deployment. One of those stressors is that of communicating with our

family and friends back home," Hill said.

"Birthdays and holidays bring about more concern because our soldiers can't go to the local corner store and select a greeting card for the occasion," he said.

The donation of these greeting cards has eased the minds of hundreds of our soldiers for the upcoming holiday season."

"It has given me such pleasure to be able to do this," Holmes said. "It seems like such a small task to do in comparison to what all of you do."

Contributions to the newspaper are welcome from service members in northern Iraq. Submit stories to cpiccmdinfo@baghdadforum.com

Weekly Words of Wisdom

“*No man is entitled to the blessings of freedom unless he be vigilant in its preservation.*”

General Douglas MacArthur

Shhh! Remember our enemies are listening. They want to know what you know. Keep it to yourself.

101st Airborne Division

"We have a rendezvous with destiny."



Treatment — training style



Photo by Sgt. Troy Chatwin/367th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Cpl. Marcus Barkley of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 223rd Engineer Battalion, and classmates practice incubating a dummy Oct. 23 during the airway management portion the Emergency Medical Technician certification class at Forward Operating Base Ironhorse. The EMT course is the only one in Iraq certified by the National Registry and the U.S. Army Medical Center School.

Kirkuk Airbase Chapel Schedule

Friday

5 a.m., 7 p.m. — Islamic prayer

9 a.m. — Catholic Mass (Sky Soldier chapel)

Saturday

7 p.m. — Catholic Mass

Sunday

8 a.m. — Gospel Service

9 a.m. — Catholic Mass

(Sky Soldier chapel)

10 a.m. — General Protestant

11:30 a.m. — Catholic Mass

1 p.m. — Latter-Day Saints

2 p.m. — Catholic Mass (Sky Soldiers Chapel)

7 p.m. — Protestant Service

Tuesday

6:30 p.m. — Growing as a Christian: Studying the Book of James

Wednesday

8 a.m. — The Bible in Light of Current History and Local Events

5:30 p.m. — Building Your Faith: Studying the Book of Hebrews

*All services are held at the Ten Days From Tomorrow Chapel unless otherwise noted. Times subject to change. Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist and others should contact chapel administration for updates of their religious requirements and support.

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firefighting force in May when Pruett envisioned a local firefighting force patrolling the grounds of the 101st Airborne's division-rear compound.

Pruett, whose son Spc. Eren Pruett works directly for him with the 938th Engineers, labored all summer towards his goal of training the firefighting force through the division.

Nov. 3 marked the moment that vision finally became a reality.

Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, 101st Airborne Division commanding general, praised Pruett and his soldiers' service during the graduation ceremony.

"Others are looking to you for an example. Just now in Baghdad, they are trying to organize what you have completed," Petraeus said.

Petraeus presented the graduates with their diplomas and a 101st

Airborne Division challenge coin.

"A lot of people have asked why there are so many 'firsts' in Ninevah ... the real reason is you, it's the people of Ninevah. You are the reason why we are leading the rest of Iraq," he said.

The graduates now start their 30-day "ride along" program, where the Mosul firemen will follow the Army firemen on real missions. After the 30 days, they are off on their own.

When that day comes, the academy

instructors have full trust in the new firemen. The firemen have even assisted their Coalition brethren in combating enemy forces.

"Some of them have told us little things about people around town and we passed the info forward. I trust them 100 percent," Voss said.

Confidence is not an issue either.

"The difference between the past and now is that we were firefighters, now we are firefighters and rescuers," said Sami Hammadali

Stressed?

Units can schedule group sessions with the 113th Medical Company (Combat Stress Control). These classes help decrease anxiety due to prolonged exposure of living and working in a combat zone. For more information, call Lt. Cheri Waide at 914-360-3267.

